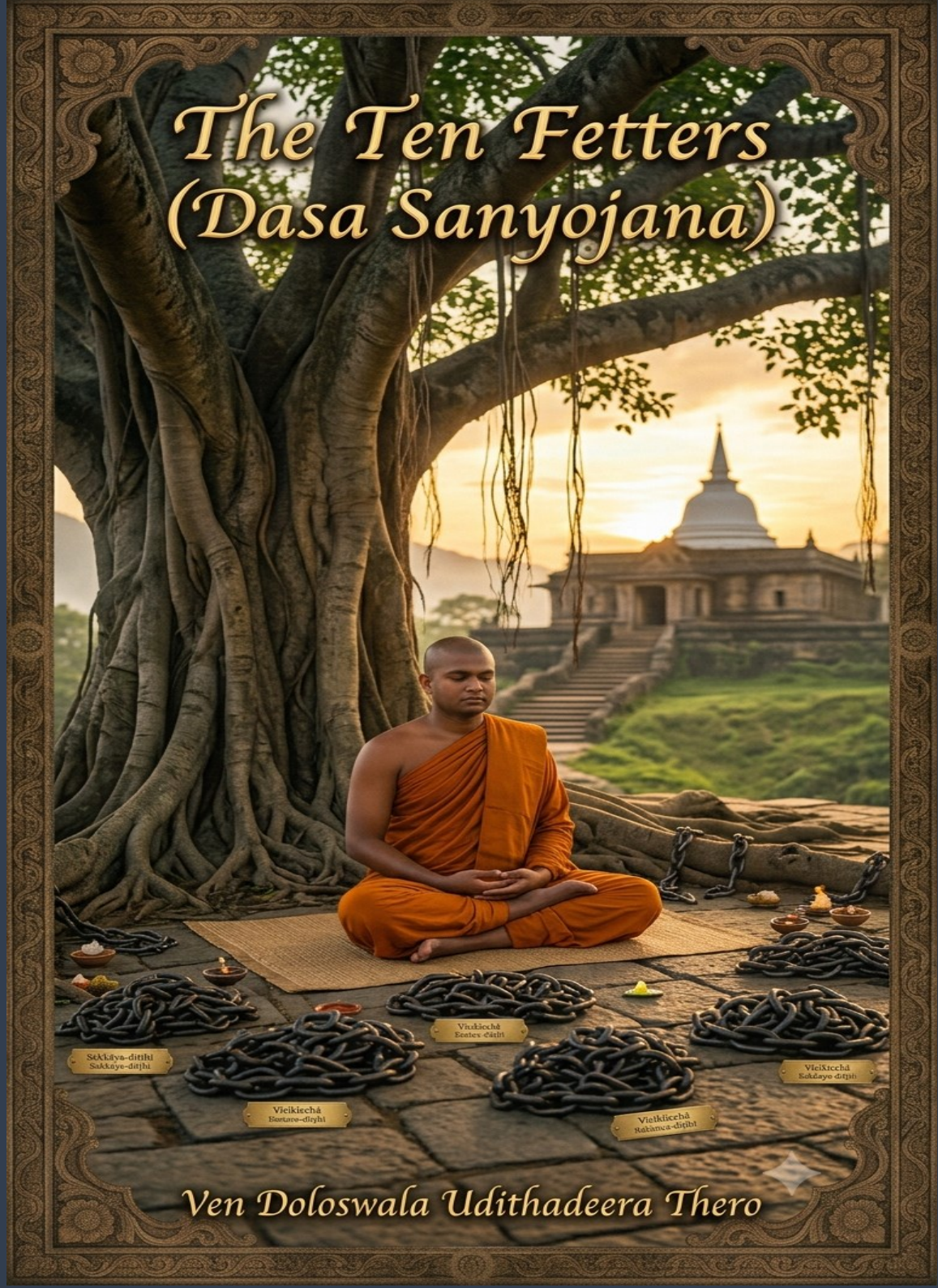
Dammadassi Buddhist Center

The Ten Fetters
(Dasa Sanyojana)



Ven Doloswala Udithadeera Thero

Sabbatānaṁ Dhamma dānaṁ Jināti

(The Gift of Dhamma Excels All Gifts)

Providing support or giving something to others is known as **'Sangaha'** (hospitality or sharing). Providing physical necessities such as food, drinks, and clothing is called **'Āmisa-sangaha'** (material sharing). Providing the Dhamma (the Buddha's teachings) to someone's life is called **'Dhamma-sangaha'** (sharing of the Dhamma). The Blessed One (The Buddha) expounded in the *Anguttara Nikaya* that among both material sharing and the sharing of the Dhamma, the sharing of the Dhamma is indeed the supreme.

May these merits be received by our beloved father, **Mr. B. Gnanadasa**! May his afterlife be fortunate, filled with abundance, and may his journey through Samsara be peaceful! May the fiery sufferings of Samsara be extinguished, and may he attain the supreme bliss of Nibbana!

We respectfully transfer these merits to the Most Venerable **Kadangoda Samitha Mahanayaka Thero**, the Most Venerable Chief Prelate (Mahanayaka), holder of the Tripitakacharya and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degrees, of the Iddamalgoda Vihara Sector of the Amarapura Maha Nikaya. We also offer our respectful merits to the Chief Sanghanayaka of the Kukulu Dekooralaya, the Most Venerable **Ratnapure Seevali Nayaka Thero** (Master of Arts); to our respected teacher and the Registrar of our Nikaya, the Venerable **Delwala Muditha Nayaka Thero**; to the Judicial Chief Prelate (Adhikaranasanga Nayaka), the Venerable **Willambe Amitha Nayaka Thero** (Bachelor of Arts - Honours); and to the Computer work and book preparation Venerable **Meepagama Sangharatana Thero**. Our grateful

transfer of merits is also extended to the Venerable **Kalawane Sanghamajee Thero** and the Venerable **Delwala Saranasiri Thero**, who helped in various ways.

Furthermore, we transfer merits to the Honorable President, Secretary, Treasurer, and all devotees of the **Dhammadassi Buddhist Centre**, as well as to everyone who provides the monthly and Poya day alms (Dana), and all those who contributed to this noble endeavor.

May all these merits conduce to your well-being in this world, to a happy rebirth in the next world, and ultimately lead to the realization of the peaceful and supreme Bliss of Nibbana!

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(By the Editor. Ven Meepagama Sangarathana Thero)

The Ten Fetters (Dasa Sanyojana)

An Analytical Exposition of Spiritual Bonds and Their Eradication

Sakkayaditthi (Identity View / Self-Illusion)

We frequently use expressions such as: "I see my mind, my body, my form, my eyes, just the way I think, just the way I contemplate," or "I walk, I eat, I drink, I bathe." These words imply the existence of an individual called 'I', or rather, they create the notion of a distinct 'self'. That very feeling, that thought, that notion, and that concept is known as **Sakkayaditthi** (Identity View or Self-Illusion).

Sakkaya is a term used to denote the Five Aggregates of Clinging (*Pancha Upadanakkhandha*), namely: form (*rupa*), sensation (*vedana*), perception (*sanna*), mental formations (*sankhara*), and consciousness (*vinnana*). This definition is explicitly stated in the *Chula Vedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya*.

Ditthi (View) refers to the flawed way of thinking, contemplating, and believing that within these Five Aggregates of Clinging, there exists a living being, an individual, a soul, or a distinct entity called 'I'.

Many canonical discourses (*Suttas*) mention twenty types of *Sakkayaditthi*. These twenty types are collectively referred to as the **Twentyfold Identity View**.

The Four Manifestations Regarding Form (*Rupa*)

1. Rupam Attato Samanupassati (Regarding form as the self)

One regards form as the self. Simply viewing one's own physical form or body as a living being, an individual, or a soul constitutes the first type of *Sakkayaditthi*.

2. Rupavantam Va Attanam Samanupassati (Regarding the self as possessing form)

One regards the self as something generated from form. Some believe that the soul is born out of the four great elements. Here, the term 'form' (*rupa*) refers to the four great elements: earth (*pathavi*), water (*apo*), fire (*tejo*), and air (*vayo*). Meanwhile, the term 'self' (*attanam*) represents the other four aggregates: sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. Those holding this view believe that sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness arise based on the four great elements.

The Analogy of the Tree and its Shadow:

Just as there is a tree with a shadow, and the shadow is something that exists because of the tree; those with this view think, contemplate, and believe that the self is an entity generated because of the physical form.

3. Rupasmim Va Attanam Samanupassati (Regarding the self as within form)

One regards the self as residing within form. While 'form' (*rupa*) denotes this body born of the four great elements, the 'self' (*attanam*) denotes the four aggregates of sensation, perception,

mental formations, and consciousness. People with this mindset believe that the self exists inside this body, much like a vessel.

The Analogy of the Scented Casket:

Consider a casket filled with the fragrance of flowers. The casket is akin to the form, and the fragrance of the flowers is akin to the self. Just as the fragrance dwells within the casket, those with this view think, contemplate, and believe that the self exists within the physical body.

4. Attani Va Rupam Samanupassati (Regarding form as within the self)

One regards form as residing within the self. In this view, the 'self' (*attanam*) denotes the four aggregates (sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness), while 'form' (*rupa*) denotes the body born of the four great elements. They conceptualize that the physical form is located within a vast, overarching self.

The Analogy of the Gem in a Casket:

Consider a casket containing a precious gem. Here, the casket is akin to the self, and the gem inside is akin to the form. Those with this view think, contemplate, and believe that the form is contained within the casket of the self.

The Four Manifestations Regarding the Aggregate of Sensation (*Vedana*)

5. Vedanam Attato Samanupassati

One regards sensation as the self.

6. Vedanavantam Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as possessing sensation (or as something generated from sensation).

7. Vedanaya Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as residing within sensation.

8. Attani Va Vedanam Samanupassati

One regards sensation as residing within the self.

The Four Manifestations Regarding the Aggregate of Perception (*Sanna*)

9. Sannam Attato Samanupassati

One regards perception as the self.

10. Sannavantam Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as possessing perception (or as something generated from perception).

11. Sannaya Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as residing within perception.

12. Attani Va Sannam Samanupassati

One regards perception as residing within the self.

The Four Manifestations Regarding the Aggregate of Mental Formations (*Sankhara*)

13. Sankhare Attato Samanupassati

One regards mental formations as the self.

14. Sankharavantam Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as possessing mental formations (or as something generated from mental formations).

15. Sankharesu Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as residing within mental formations.

16. Attani Va Sankhare Samanupassati

One regards mental formations as residing within the self.

The Four Manifestations Regarding the Aggregate of Consciousness (*Vinnana*)

17. Vinnanam Attato Samanupassati

One regards consciousness as the self.

18. Vinnanavantam Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as possessing consciousness (or as something generated from consciousness).

19. Vinnanasmin Va Attanam Samanupassati

One regards the self as residing within consciousness.

20. Attani Va Vinnanam Samanupassati

One regards consciousness as residing within the self.

Explanatory Note on the Mental Aggregates

The manner in which *Sakkayaditthi* arises based on the aggregates of sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness has been demonstrated above. One regards sensation as the self; one regards perception as the self; one regards mental formations as the self; one regards consciousness as the self. In these four specific instances, it should be clearly understood that one merely misconstrues the respective aggregates of sensation, perception, mental formations, and consciousness themselves as the ultimate self.

Clarification on the Mental Aggregates in the Remaining Views

In the four instances where one regards the self as being generated from sensation, perception, mental formations, or consciousness, it must be understood that the term 'self' refers to the other four aggregates, excluding the specific aggregate mentioned in that instance.

Similarly, when it is viewed that the self resides within sensation, perception, mental formations, or consciousness, it should be understood that 'self' denotes the remaining four aggregates, excluding the one specified.

Furthermore, in the four instances where it is conceived that sensation, perception, mental formations, or consciousness reside within the self, it must be understood that 'self' represents the other four aggregates apart from the one explicitly stated.

The Cause Arising Behind Sakkayaditthi

According to the *Parileyya Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*, craving (*tanha*) arises in an uninstructed worldling (*assutavata puthujjana*) who experiences feelings born of contact accompanied by ignorance. Driven by that craving, the identity view (*sakkayaditthi*) that "one regards form as the self" comes into being.

The arising of all twenty types of *sakkayaditthi* should be understood in accordance with the aforementioned *Parileyya Sutta*. The underlying process here is that craving arises in the uninstructed worldling as they experience feelings born of ignorant contact, and consequently, *sakkayaditthi* is manifested due to that craving.

Every component involved in this process—the ignorance (*avijja*), contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedana*), craving (*tanha*), and the view of self (*atmaditthi*) emerging from that craving—possesses the following nature:

- **Khaya dhammam:** Subject to exhaustion / fading away.
- **Vaya dhammam:** Subject to decay / destruction.
- **Viraga dhammam:** Subject to dispassion (a nature to which one should not cling).
- **Nirodha dhammam:** Subject to cessation (to be extinguished).

- **Aniccam:** Impermanent.
- **Sankhatam:** Conditioned (arisen from causes).
- **Paticcasamuppannam:** Dependently co-arisen.

By comprehending it in this manner, it becomes perfectly clear that *sakkayaditthi* is something impermanent, painful, non-self, subject to change, and ultimately, something to be eradicated.

The Complexity of Explaining Sakkayaditthi

Explaining *sakkayaditthi* to someone is exceptionally difficult. In truth, it is virtually impossible to fully describe, clarify, and convey something that fundamentally lacks a living being, an individual, or a soul.

The Analogy of the Bogeyman (Goni Billá):

A young child might construct an imaginary mental picture of a "bogeyman". However, in reality, no such bogeyman exists. Since he does not exist, it is impossible to describe how tall, fair, dark, thin, or fat the bogeyman is. The inability to provide a precise and concrete explanation of *sakkayaditthi* is quite similar to this analogy. Nevertheless, we have attempted to clarify it to some extent based on the contents of the Tripitaka and the teachings of other religious traditions.

Eradicating Sakkayaditthi

By now, you would have realized that *sakkayaditthi* is a wrong notion, concept, and thought that arises due to a lack of understanding regarding the Five Aggregates of Clinging and a failure to perceive reality. However, *sakkayaditthi* is not eradicated

merely by this realization. Such an understanding is simply a matter of learning—a logical and intellectual knowledge gained by contemplating what has been studied (*Cintamaya Panna* / wisdom based on thinking). *Sakkayaditthi* cannot be eliminated through logical knowledge alone.

How then does one eradicate *sakkayaditthi*? Is there a path to achieve this? What is that path?

Indeed, there is a path to eradicate *sakkayaditthi*. That path is none other than the **Noble Eightfold Path**. When one develops insight meditation (*Vipassana*) by contemplating the Five Aggregates of Clinging as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*), *sakkayaditthi* is completely eradicated.

Vicikiccha (Skeptical Doubt)

Unwise or improper contemplation is known as ***Ayoniso Manasikara***. *Ayoniso* means "without wisdom" or "unwisely," and *Manasikara* means "mental attention" or "contemplation." For a person who contemplates unwisely, unarisen unwholesome states arise, and already arisen unwholesome states flourish and expand. *Vicikiccha* (skeptical doubt) is one such defilement (*klesha*) that arises primarily due to *Ayoniso Manasikara*.

The eight manifestations of *Vicikiccha* should be understood as follows:

1. Buddhe kankhati vicikicchati nadhimuccati nappasidati

One doubts the Buddha, feels uncertainty, fails to reach a firm conviction, and does not achieve devotion or clarity of mind. Doubting the Buddha-jewel (*Buddha Ratna*) involves questioning: "Did a Buddha truly exist or not? Did He truly possess cosmic virtues such as *Araham* and *Samma Sambuddha*? Did His physical form truly possess the marvelous and miraculous attributes of the thirty-two major marks and eighty minor characteristics of a Great Man?" This constitutes the first manifestation of *Vicikiccha*.

2. Dhamme kankhati vicikicchati nadhimuccati nappasidati

One doubts the Dhamma, feels uncertainty, fails to reach a firm conviction, and does not achieve devotion or clarity of mind. This doubt centers on the Dhamma-jewel: "Did the Buddha truly preach a Dhamma that He realized by Himself? Does this Dhamma genuinely possess virtues such as *Svakkhata* (being well-expounded)? Can someone who practices according to this Dhamma truly realize the Paths and Fruits (*Magga-Phala*)?" Doubts arising based on the Dhamma constitute the second manifestation of *Vicikiccha*.

3. Sanghe kankhati vicikicchati nadhimuccati nappasidati

One doubts the Sangha, feels uncertainty, fails to reach a definitive conclusion, and does not establish devotion or clarity of mind. This involves doubting the Sangha-jewel: "Did a noble community of disciples (*Ariya Sangha*) who attained the Paths and Fruits truly exist? Did they possess virtues like *Supatipanno* (practicing rightly)? Were there truly individuals among them who eradicated the mental fetters (*Sanyojana*), and

is such a thing genuinely possible?" Doubting the Sangha in this manner is the third manifestation of *Vicikiccha*.

4. Sikkhaya kankhati vicikicchati nadhimuccati nappasidati

One doubts the Threefold Training (*Trishiksha*) of Morality (*Sila*), Concentration (*Samadhi*), and Wisdom (*Panna*); one feels uncertainty, fails to reach a firm conviction, and does not achieve clarity of mind. This is the doubt that questions: "Does practicing the Threefold Training yield any real result? Can one attain the Paths and Fruits through it? Is the path of practice I am following right or wrong, successful or unsuccessful?" Doubts of this nature form the fourth manifestation of *Vicikiccha*.

5. Doubt Regarding the Past (Pubbanta)

One doubts the past lives: "Did I exist in the past? Did I not exist? Who was I? How did I live? Having been whom, what did I become?" This questioning of past existence is the fifth manifestation of *Vicikiccha*. Failing to comprehend the law of cause and effect (causality), a being believes there is a permanent entity called 'I'. This belief causes the doubt: "Did I exist in the past or not?" However, a person who clearly understands causality through wise contemplation (*Yoniso Manasikara*) grasps the core principle: *"Avijja paccaya sankhara, sankhara paccaya vinnanam..."* (Dependent on ignorance, mental formations arise; dependent on mental formations, consciousness arises...). Due to the non-realization of the Four Noble Truths, volitional formations—whether meritorious, non-meritorious, or imperturbable (formless jhanic wholesome consciousness)—arise. The doctrinal law dictates that a novel rebirth-linking consciousness (*Patisandhi Vinnana*) arises based on one of these

volitional formations manifesting at the moment of death. One who does not understand this process thoroughly harbors doubts and anxieties regarding past births.

6. Doubt Regarding the Future (Aparanta)

One doubts the future lives: "Will I be reborn after death? Will I not be reborn? Where will I be born? How will I be born? As whom or what will I be born?" This skepticism regarding future existence is the sixth manifestation of *Vicikiccha*. The future is a continuous process governed entirely by the law of cause and effect, which remains uncomprehended by those ignorant of the Dhamma. A specific karma we accumulated—either a wholesome action performed in this life or in a previous one—comes to mind at the moment of death. Driven by that causal karma, birth in a future life occurs. Beings generate doubts because they fail to understand this reality. To eliminate this doubt, one must understand five specific factors found within Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppada*): craving (*tanha*), clinging (*upadana*), existence/becoming (*bhava*), ignorance (*avijja*), and volitional formations (*sankhara*). Craving is the desire that arises based on sensory objects like forms. Driven by craving, clinging or intense grasping develops. Conditioned by clinging, the generation of karma (*bhava*) takes place, and according to those generated karmas, subsequent rebirth occurs. Once this process is understood as a purely causal law, the question "Will I be born in the future or not?" ceases to arise.

7. Pacchuppanne kankhati (Doubt Regarding the Present)

One doubts the present life. Questions arise such as: "Where was I before this birth? Where will I be born after death? Does an entity called 'I' truly exist, or does it not?" Thus, skepticism arises regarding the present Five Aggregates. The reason for this, too, is the lack of proper comprehension of the law of cause and effect. One must understand how rebirth-linking consciousness arises due to wholesome and unwholesome karma (*"Sankhara paccaya vinnanam"*), and how name-and-form, the six sense bases, contact, feeling, and craving arise conditioned by consciousness. When this is mastered, one realizes that there is only a causal process here, entirely devoid of a living being or an individual. This doubt is completely and utterly eradicated only by the Path-consciousness of Stream-entry (*Sotapatti Magga Citta*).

8. Paticcasamuppanne kankhati (Doubt Regarding Dependent Origination)

One doubts Dependent Origination itself. A person lacking Dhamma-realization fails to understand *Paticcasamuppada* precisely because of the deep-seated, egoistic belief: "There is a living being, an individual, a soul, or a distinct entity called 'I'." It is completely natural for doubts regarding Dependent Origination to manifest when the law of causality is not fully perceived.

It must be thoroughly and clearly understood that **all eight of these manifestations of *Vicikiccha* are completely eradicated at the stage of Stream-entry (*Sotapatti Magga*)**.

Silabbata-paramasa (Clinging to Rites and Rituals)

This refers to the dogmatic attachment to and misapprehension of various precepts and vows. For instance, you have seen cattle; they walk on four legs, lie on the ground, consume food directly with their mouths from the earth, and drink water directly with their mouths from water sources. Certain ascetics contemplated and believed that defilements could be eradicated by mimicking the behavior of animals. This imitation is termed '*Sila*' (conduct). Undertaking such a vow, they walk on all fours like an animal, eat like an animal, drink water like an animal, and sleep on the ground like an animal. This practice is termed '*Vrata*' (vow).

Some individuals strictly observe the 'ox-vow' (*Go-vrata*) by behaving like cattle, the 'goat-vow' (*Aja-vrata*) by behaving like goats, or the 'dog-vow' (*Kukkura-vrata*) by behaving like dogs. This is an erroneous practice rooted entirely in wrong view (*miccha-ditthi*). Defilements can never be eradicated through such practices, nor can the mind be purified by them.

Furthermore, some ascetics practice austerities such as kindling four bonfires around themselves while exposing their bodies to the scorching sun from above, a practice known as the fivefold austerity (*Pancha-tapas*). Similarly, they adopt vows of submerging themselves in freezing water during cold seasons, sleeping or sitting upon thorns, or standing agonizingly on a single leg. All of these constitute *Silabbata-paramasa*.

By developing Right View (*Samma-ditthi*), a person realizes that enlightenment (*Nirvana*) cannot be achieved through such extreme methods. They understand that to realize Nirvana, one must systematically cultivate Virtue (*Sila*), Concentration (*Samadhi*), and Wisdom (*Panna*). These three lower fetters that bind beings to samsara—*Sakkayaditthi* (Identity View), *Vicikiccha* (Skeptical Doubt), and *Silabbata-paramasa* (Clinging to Rites and Rituals)—are completely

eradicated upon attaining the Path of Stream-entry (*Sotapatti Magga*).

Kamaraga Sanyojana (The Fetter of Sensual Lust)

Kamaraga is the desire, attachment, infatuation, love, affection, and binding fondness directed toward sensual objects: forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects. It arises due to a pleasant sign (*Subha Nimitta*) coupled with unwise contemplation (*Ayoniso Manasikara*).

- **Subha Nimitta:** Refers to delightful and pleasing forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects.

- **Ayoniso Manasikara:** Refers to unwise or improper contemplation.

When the eye encounters a form, a person who contemplates unwisely develops desire, attachment, bondage, and craving toward that beautiful and pleasing form. This is *Kamaraga*. The arising of *Kamaraga* through sounds, smells, tastes, and touch should be understood in the exact same manner.

Kamaraga, one of the most potent defilements binding beings to samsara, is classified as a fetter (*Sanyojana*). The meaning of the word fetter is a defilement or a nature that prevents one from escaping samsara, keeping one tightly bound within it.

Vyapada Sanyojana (The Fetter of Ill-Will)

Vyapada is expressed through terms such as anger, hatred, wrath, revenge, retaliation, jealousy, disgust, aversion, and repulsiveness. It arises due to a repulsive sign (*Patigha Nimitta*) and unwise contemplation (*Ayoniso Manasikara*).

- **Patigha Nimitta:** Refers to unpleasable or undesirable forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, and thoughts.

- **Ayoniso Manasikara:** Refers to contemplating unwisely when encountering such undesirable, unpleasant, and disagreeable objects or thoughts.

When one contemplates in this unwise manner, unarisen ill-will arises, and already arisen ill-will expands and intensifies. A comprehensive explanation of *Ayoniso Manasikara* is found in the *Sabbasava Sutta*. It describes *Ayoniso Manasikara* as thinking in a manner that generates unarisen taints of sensual desire (*kamasava*), taints of existence (*bhavasava*), and taints of ignorance (*avijjasava*). Through such contemplation, the already arisen taints of sensual desire, existence, and ignorance grow. To state it simply, *Ayoniso Manasikara* means thinking in a way that increases greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*).

At the stage of the Path of Once-returning (*Sakadagami Magga*), both *Kamaraga* and *Vyapada* are significantly weakened. Upon reaching the Path of Non-returning (*Anagami Magga*), *Vyapada* is completely eradicated. Among the defilements that arise within beings, *Vyapada* is considered exceptionally dangerous because a person consumed by ill-will can commit heinous crimes in a single, momentary flash.

Rupa-raga Sanyojana (The Fetter of Lust for Fine-Material Existence)

Rupa-raga is the desire or craving directed toward the fine-material spheres of absorption (*Rupavacara Jhana*). A person who attains these fine-material absorptions develops an exceedingly subtle attachment toward those meditative states. This is also known as attachment to jhana (*Jhana-nikanti*). This attachment to jhana, along with the desire to be reborn in the fine-material Brahma realms, is called *Rupa-raga*. It is a defilement that is eradicated entirely by the Path of Arahatship (*Arihat Magga*).

The Method of Kasina Meditation

When a *Kasina* meditation practice is masterfully developed, the meditator beholds the *Kasina* light. This process can be explained as follows:

Generally, prepare a circular disk about the size of a plate (approximately one span in diameter). Apply reddish clay smoothly onto the circular board, layered repeatedly to ensure a flawless, flat surface completely free of crevices, much like a smooth cake. It is advisable to prepare a seat about one foot high for meditation. Sit upon the seat and place the *Kasina* disk on the ground at a distance of about two and a half cubits. When placing it, it must be securely positioned level with the ground. Having placed it, pay homage to the Triple Gem, offer your life to the Triple Gem, and gaze at the *Kasina* disk with half-closed eyes, mentally noting: *"Pathavi, Pathavi, Pathavi"* (Earth, Earth, Earth). While mentally noting, close your eyes from time to time and continue to internalize it.

After practicing this for a considerable period, the *Kasina* disk will appear to the mind even when you close your eyes. Once the *Kasina* disk appears clearly to the mind, you may rise from that spot, move to another location, sit down, and continue meditating while mentally repeating the word *"Pathavi, Pathavi"*. If the *Kasina* disk remains vividly visible to the mind during this meditation, it is excellent. If it fades away, you must return to the place where the physical *Kasina* disk is positioned, look at it again, and grasp the meditative sign (*nimitta*).

When practiced in this manner, if the *Kasina* disk appears vividly to the mind during meditation and its brilliant, glowing nature is perceived, make the following resolve: *"May my Kasina disk expand to about an inch in size."* Following this resolve, mentally note *"Pathavi, Pathavi, Pathavi"* once more. After a short while, you will perceive that the *Kasina* disk has expanded to about an inch. If it appears successfully, resolve further: *"May the Kasina disk expand to about two inches,"* and continue to cultivate the meditation as before.

In this gradual manner, expand it bit by bit: *"May it expand to the size of the room I am in! May it expand to the size of the land I reside on! May it expand to the size of this village! May it expand to the size of this town! May it expand to the size of this district! May it expand to the size of this province! May it expand to the size of this country!"* It should be expanded step by step in this sequence. If at any point during your expansion the *Kasina* disk ceases to grow despite your resolve, you must stop expanding. Cease the expansion and simply anchor the mind, focusing entirely on the *Kasina* disk. Without repeating *"Pathavi, Pathavi"*, if you can maintain the mind firmly anchored within the *Kasina* disk for about an hour, it can be considered a highly advanced stage of progress.

Subsequently, make this resolve: *"May my Kasina concentration endure for five minutes."* Having resolved so, when you මෙනෙහි (meditate on) the *Kasina* disk again, it will appear to the mind, endure for five minutes, and then dissolve. If it dissolves, immediately think repeatedly: *"May this Kasina disk appear within my heart-base."* At that very moment, the *Kasina* disk will become visible within the heart. At that juncture, investigate the jhana factors: initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicara*), rapture (*piti*), bliss (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggata*). If these jhana factors become distinctly manifest to you upon investigation, you should know that you have attained the First Jhana (*Prathama Jhana*). Upon reaching such a state, it is highly valuable to practice solely under the direct guidance of a qualified teacher. This explanation has been provided merely to afford some basic, foundational knowledge regarding the fine-material absorptions (*Rupavacara Jhana*). Do not attempt to practice meditation based on this description alone; always cultivate meditation with the explicit guidance of a teacher.

Arupa-raga Sanyojana (The Fetter of Lust for Immaterial Existence)

The subtle attachment or craving toward the immaterial spheres of absorption (*Arupavacara Jhana*) is known as *Jhana-nikanti*. This attachment to immaterial absorptions, along with the craving to be reborn in the formless Brahma realms (*Arupavacara Brahma Loka*), is termed *Arupa-raga*. There are four immaterial absorptions: The Sphere of Boundless Space (*Akasanancayatana*), The Sphere of Boundless Consciousness (*Vinnanancayatana*), The Sphere of Nothingness (*Akincancayatana*), and The Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception (*Nevasannanasannayatana*).

A meditator who has successfully developed *Kasina* meditation and generated the mental sign (*nimitta*), upon attaining the four fine-material absorptions (*Rupavacara Jhana*), radiates that *Kasina* light. Treating the entire radiated area as infinite space, the meditator visualizes and contemplates: *"Akaso ananto, Akaso ananto"* (Space is boundless, space is boundless). The concentration born of this practice is called the *Akasanancayatana Samadhi*.

To objectify this boundless space (where space refers to the entire area enveloped by the *Kasina* light), the mind itself must become more boundless than space. Therefore, it is not space that is truly infinite, but the mind or consciousness itself. Realizing this, the meditator contemplates: *"Vinnanam anantam, Vinnanam anantam"* (Consciousness is boundless, consciousness is boundless). The concentration generated through this contemplation is known as the *Vinnanancayatana Samadhi*.

Thereafter, since it is with consciousness that one objectifies boundless space, and in the sense that nothing exists beyond that consciousness, the meditator focuses on the object of nothingness, contemplating: *"Natthi kinci, natthi kinci"* (There is nothing, there is nothing). The concentration that arises when cultivating this meditation is called *Akincancayatana*.

Finally, by contemplating that beyond consciousness there is neither anything that exists nor does not exist, the concentration called *Nevasannanasannayatana Samadhi* is attained. The exceedingly subtle attachment to this state—the immaterial *Jhana-nikanti*—along with the craving for the formless Brahma realms, constitutes *Arupa-raga*.

Mana Sanyojana (The Fetter of Conceit)

Every individual makes a certain self-appraisal or self-measurement. This measurement is known as *Mana* (conceit). Thinking "I am superior" is termed *Seya-mana* (superiority conceit); thinking "I am equal to others" is termed *Sadisa-mana* (equality conceit); and thinking "I am inferior to others" is termed *Hina-mana* (inferiority conceit). The Tipitaka thoroughly explains how these three forms of conceit branch into nine distinct variations:

- **Seyyassa Seyyo:** Regarding oneself as superior, and thinking "I am even superior to those who are superior."
- **Seyyassa Sadiso:** Regarding oneself as superior, yet comparing oneself as equal to those who are superior.
- **Seyyassa Hino:** Regarding oneself as superior, yet thinking "I am inferior to those who are superior."
- **Sadisassa Seyyo:** Thinking "I am superior to those who are my equals." *(Example: If two individuals hold the same degree but one is more skillful, they might think, "Though he is my equal in qualification, I am more skillful and thus superior to him.")*
- **Sadisassa Sadiso:** Thinking "I am equal to my equals."
- **Sadisassa Hino:** Thinking "I am inferior to my equals."
- **Hinassa Seyyo:** Thinking "I am superior to those who are inferior."
- **Hinassa Sadiso:** Thinking "I am equal to those who are inferior."

- **Hinassa Hino:** Thinking "I am even more inferior than those who are inferior."

All nine forms of this conceit are completely and utterly eradicated by the Path of Arahatship (*Arihat Magga*).

Uddhacca Sanyojana (The Fetter of Restlessness)

The scattered or distracted nature of the mind is called *Uddhacca*. The Buddha's teaching states, *"Bahiddha vikkhittam hoti cittam"*, meaning the scattering of the mind toward external objects constitutes restlessness. It is the nature of the mind where it does not remain anchored to a single object but constantly wanders across various thoughts. When the mind lacks concentration, this state of restlessness prevails. The defining characteristic of *Uddhacca* is that it makes it difficult to retain the mind on a single object of focus.

Avijja Sanyojana (The Fetter of Ignorance)

Avijja (ignorance) is the nature that conceals reality, preventing it from being known or perceived as it truly is. Because of ignorance, that which is impermanent is perceived as permanent; that which is painful (*dukkha*) is perceived as pleasurable; that which is non-self (*anatta*) is perceived as a self; and that which is foul (*asubha*) is perceived as beautiful. This inverted perception or distortion of recognition (*Sanna-vipallasa*) occurs solely because of ignorance.

There is also a specific cause for the arising of ignorance. The Buddha's discourses reveal that ignorance arises due to the Five Mental Hindrances (*Pancha Nivarana*). Furthermore, the teachings clarify that ignorance is generated conditioned by the mental taints: the taint of sensual desire (*kamasava*), the taint of existence (*bhavasava*), and the taint of ignorance (*avijjasava*). This can be clearly understood by studying the *Sammaditthi Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya*.

In brief, ignorance is the failure to realize the Four Noble Truths—Suffering (*Dukkha*), its Origin (*Samudaya*), its Cessation (*Nirodha*), and the Path (*Magga*)—as they truly are. Although the Five Aggregates of Clinging are inherently painful, under the influence of ignorance, they are perceived as a source of pleasure. Though craving is the root cause of suffering, ignorance makes it seem as though desire or craving is the gateway to happiness. Freedom from craving—Nirvana—is the ultimate bliss; yet, to a person shrouded in ignorance, Nirvana appears either as a state of great misery or as an exceedingly difficult and agonizing practice.

Conclusion and Meritorious Dedication

We have provided a very basic explanation of the Ten Fetters (*Dasa Sanyojana*) here. Noble individuals who wish to acquire a profound and exhaustive understanding should consult the texts of the *Abhidhamma* to study their deep analytical details. However, please be kind enough to note that this specific exposition was written solely for the purpose of clarifying these concepts for the general public.

May the merit accrued from compiling this brief summary of the Ten Fetters be unconditionally received by us, the authors, and by

all of you, the readers! I earnestly wish that this noble merit serves as a powerful aid to comfortably realize the element of Nirvana in a very near future birth.

May the Triple Gem bless you all!

Dedicated for the Sharing of the Dhamma

(Dhamma Dāna Piṇisa)

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